Creating community, and identifying safe spaces for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and allied students, staff and faculty at the University of Southern Maine

www.usm.maine.edu/csgd/safe-zone-project
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<table>
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<th>Pronoun 1</th>
<th>Pronoun 2</th>
<th>Pronoun 3</th>
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Why Respect People's Preferred Gender Pronouns?

• You should not assume what people’s PGPs are just by looking at them.

• Using people's preferred pronouns is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for them and their gender identity.

• Referring to people with the wrong pronouns can make them feel disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, or alienated – even further marginalizing a group already at risk.

• If you make a mistake, own it right away by correcting yourself and accept others’ correcting you with grace.
Introductions

1. First name
2. Preferred gender pronouns
3. What is your first positive memory of anything having to do with the LGBTQ community?
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Word/term</th>
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<th>I know it somewhat.</th>
<th>No clue!</th>
<th>What I think the term means or associations with the term:</th>
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<td>binary gender</td>
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**Biological Sex**  
*(anatomy, chromosomes, hormones)*  
male --------------------------------- intersex ---------------------------------- female

**Gender Identity**  
*(psychological sense of self)*  
man --------------------- transgender/gender queer -------------- woman

**Gender Expression**  
*(communication of gender)*  
masculine -------------- androgynous/gender neutral ------------- feminine  
gender non-conforming

**Sexual Orientation**  
*(romantic/erotic response)*  
attracted to women -------- bisexual/pansexual -------- attracted to men  
queer

asexual

Adapted for the USM Safe Zone Project from materials from the Center for Gender Sanity
**Situation(#1)**

A class of fourth grade students are brainstorming a list of topics they can write about during a writing workshop. The conversation veers towards interests and hobbies. "And Sam says he wants to write about his dance class. The next day he comes to school wearing his dance shoes. You overhear two boys calling to Sam as he takes walks by them in the hallway. "How come you’re wearing girls’ ballet shoes?" "And" "Sam’s a ballerina!" "And" "Where’s your tutu, girly?" "Both start laughing."

**What do you do?**
Situation(#2)

Sixth grade teacher Ms. Rojo learns from one of her students’ moms that on the previous day’s bus ride home, her daughter Jesse had overheard er...elling her friend that her mom was a lesbian. One student yelled, “Your mom is a lesbian! Other students started chanting, ‘Lesbians are gross!’

While Jesse doesn’t say anything about it, Ms. Rojo learns from another student that the bus driver asked Jesse, as she was exiting the bus, ‘Don’t ever mention that again to any of us.’

What should Ms. Rojo do?
WHEN YOU SEE OR HEAR BULLYING
  STOP IT
  CITE THE RULES
  PROVIDE SUPPORT
  ENGAGE BYSTANDERS
  IMPOSE CONSEQUENCES
  AVOID A “WORKING THINGS OUT” APPROACH

RESPECTFULLY HELPING THE BULLIED CHILD
  MAINTAIN PRIVACY
  LISTEN
  PRAISE INDIVIDUAL COURAGE
  DETERMINE NEEDS
  PROVIDE SPACE
  OFFER REASSURANCE

BEYOND THE TEACHABLE MOMENT
  FOLLOW-UP
  ENGAGE OTHERS
  INVOLVE PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
  REFER
  TEACH: BULLIED STUDENTS, BULLIES, BYSTANDERS
  DESIGN INTERVENTION PLANS
I Can Make a Difference (grades 3-5)

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

• Why is it sometimes difficult to stand up in the face of name-calling or bullying? What is the harm of not intervening in name-calling and bias-related incidents?

• How can we prevent the use of words and phrases like “that’s so gay” or “retard” used to tease and bully people?

• How can we practice and increase our skills in confronting name-calling or hurtful words?
A group of kids are playing ball at recess and one boy drops the ball several times. Another student remarks to him, "Oh, you’re so gay! Just stop playing. We don’t want you on the team." You are on the team of the student making the remark.

What is the "right thing" to do in this situation?

How does this compare with what you think some students you know would actually do in this situation?

How does it feel to do the "right thing"?

How might it feel to do the wrong thing when you know what the right thing to do is?
Ask students to consider the difference between their responses to the questions above. Ask them what they think stops people from doing "the right thing" in situations like the ones posed (e.g., fear, not knowing what to say, etc.). Write down responses on chart paper or on the board.
Write the word “bystander” either on the board or chart paper. Ask students what they think the word means. Using their ideas, confirm that a bystander is someone who witnesses an incident but doesn’t take part in it. Explain that with name-calling and bullying, most often there are bystanders involved. Note that while bystanders are not to blame for bullying or teasing, if they laugh at it, ignore it, or simply do nothing, they may play a part in keeping it going. Offer that there have probably been times when each of us has been a bystander to name-calling and not done anything to try to stop it.
Return to the list of reasons why students sometimes stop short of doing the “right thing” and begin a brainstorm to list ideas to overcome these challenges so that students can be better friends to those who are targeted for name-calling and bullying. 'This list should just be general ideas' (tell the perpetrator to stop, get a teacher, aid or help the student who is targeted, don’t laugh, etc.)

Close this portion of the lesson by asking students to identify one of the ideas that they have tried and one they are not sure they feel confident doing just yet. Have them share their answers with a partner.
Findings from the GLSEN 2013 National School Climate Survey demonstrate that Maine schools were not safe for most lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) secondary school students. In addition, many LGBT students in Maine did not have access to important school resources, such as having a curriculum that is inclusive of LGBT people, history, or events, and were not protected by comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment school policies.
GLSEN’S 2013 National School Climate Survey

9 out of 10 Maine LGBTQ students regularly hear homophobic remarks in school
8 out of 10 Maine LGBTQ students have been verbally harassed based on their perceived sexual orientation
49% of Maine LGBTQ students who were harassed or assaulted in school never reported it to school staff
57% never told a family member about the incident
Among students who did report incidents to school authorities, only 33% said that it resulted in effective intervention by staff.
From the GLSEN School Climate Research, what are the best practices and recommendations for safe schools?

Implement comprehensive school non-discrimination, anti-bullying/harassment policies; policies that enumerate sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression

Support GSTAs (and similar school clubs) in your school

Provide professional development for school staff on LGBT student issues

Increase student access to LGBT-inclusive curricular resources
Maine Human Rights Act
Maine Civil Rights Act
• Race and color
• National origin and ancestry
• Religion
• Physical and mental disabilities
• Gender
• Sexual orientation *(added in 2005, definition includes gender identity and expression)*
Maine’s PL 659
Anti-Bullying Law

Enacted May 21, 2012
“Best Practices” for Promoting Safe Schools
At the beginning of every school year (or whenever you have a new student), ask students what their preferred names and preferred gender pronouns (PGPs) are. Help the students in the class to honor these names and pronouns every day.

Hold initial conversations about bias-based language and put-downs as part of classroom norms/policies and repeat regularly.

Intersperse diversity activities throughout the year; connect to the rest of the curriculum.

Start a Gay-Straight-Trans Alliance and/or Civil Rights Team in your school.

Make sure there are yearly professional development presentations on diversity and LGBTQ topics.

Know what your school’s policy and reporting systems involve.
Classroom Behavior & Language Policy

This classroom will tolerate no language or behavior that interferes with the physical and emotional safety of all students.

Any comments or behaviors that challenge or disparage others’ physical or mental ability, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression is not allowed.

Learning cannot happen where people do not feel safe and valued.
Speak Up 4 C’s

- Be clear
- Keep things calm
- Make the language cease
- Be comfortable in saying
Speak out against hate language/harassment!

- "Please don't say that."
- "Please don't use that language."
- "Hey, it's not cool to talk that way."
- "Those words make me uncomfortable."
- "Don't use that word; it offends me."
- "That word is against school rules."
GLSEN Days of Action

• Ally Week – October
• Transgender Day of Remembrance – November 19
• No Name Calling Week – January
• Day of Silence - April
LGBTQ Resources Links

http://www.glsen.org

http://glsen.org/chapters/southernme

http://glsen.org/chapters/downeastme

http://glsen.org/nscs  (National School Climate Survey grades 6-12)

http://glsen.org/readysetrespect  (Diversity curriculum grades K-5)

http://glsen.org/playgroundsandprejudice  (K-5 survey statistics)

http://www.tolerance.org/  (Southern Poverty Law Center materials)

http://perspectives.tolerance.org/  (literature & information texts)

http://glsen.org/safespace  (GLSEN’s Safe Space Kit)

http://www.maine.gov./doe/bullying/
Gender/Diversity Workshop Session

1. Make a classroom poster or a classroom policy statement about diversity, language, and behavior.

2. Create a draft of a classroom activity promoting diversity or looking at gender roles.
What is one thing from this workshop you might want to take with you?